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**FOURTEEN CHARGED WITH PROVIDING MATERIAL SUPPORT TO SOMALIA-
BASED TERRORIST ORGANIZATION AL-SHABAAB**

Two Arrested in Minnesota in Connection with the Charges

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department announced that four separate indictments were unsealed today in the District of Minnesota, the Southern District of Alabama and the Southern District of California charging 14 individuals with terrorism violations for providing money, personnel and services to the foreign terrorist organization al-Shabaab.

In the Southern District of Alabama, prosecutors unsealed a superseding indictment charging Omar Shafik Hammami, a U.S. citizen and former resident of Alabama, with providing material support to al-Shabaab. Separately, prosecutors in the Southern District of California unsealed an indictment charging Jihad Serwan Mostafa, a U.S. citizen and former resident of California, with providing material support to al-Shabaab.

In the District of Minnesota, prosecutors unsealed two indictments. One indictment charges Amina Farah Ali and Hawo Mohamed Hassan with providing funds to al-Shabaab. These two defendants, who are naturalized U.S. citizens and residents of Minnesota, were arrested today. Separately, prosecutors unsealed a third superseding indictment charging 10 men with terrorism offenses for leaving the United States to join al-Shabaab. Seven of these defendants had been previously charged by either indictment or criminal complaint. The remaining three defendants had not been charged before.

The arrests and charges were announced by Attorney General Eric Holder and FBI Director Robert S. Mueller, III, as well as David Kris, Assistant Attorney General for National Security; B. Todd Jones, U.S. Attorney for the District of Minnesota; Kenyen R. Brown, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Alabama; and Laura E. Duffy, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of California.

“The indictments unsealed today shed further light on a deadly pipeline that has routed funding and fighters to the al-Shabaab terror organization from cities across the United States,” said Attorney General Holder. “While our investigations are ongoing around the country, these arrests and charges should serve as an unmistakable warning to others considering joining terrorist groups like al-Shabaab – if you choose this route you can expect to find yourself in a U.S. jail cell or a casualty on the battlefield in Somalia.”

“For those who would become terrorists, these cases send a strong message,” said FBI Director Mueller. “They underscore the need for continued vigilance against those who may seek to harm us and our way of life. Our agents and analysts will continue to confront this threat with a strong and coordinated effort as we work to protect all Americans.”

Omar Hammami – Southern District of Alabama

Today in the Southern District of Alabama, prosecutors unsealed a September 2009 superseding indictment against Omar Hammami, 26, a U.S. citizen and former resident of Daphne, Alabama, also known as “Abu Mansour al-Amriki,” or “Farouk.”

The three-count indictment alleges that Hammami provided material support, including himself as personnel, to terrorists; conspired to provide material support to a designated foreign terrorist organization, al-Shabaab, and provided material support to al-Shabaab. Hammami faces a potential 15 years in prison for each of the three counts of the indictment. He is not in custody and is currently believed to be in Somalia.

Jehad Mostafa – Southern District of California

In the Southern District of California, prosecutors today unsealed an October 2009 indictment against Jehad Serwan Mostafa, 28, aka “Ahmed,” “Emir Anwar,” “Awar,” a U.S. citizen and former resident of San Diego, California.

The indictment alleges that Mostafa conspired to provide material support, including himself as personnel, to terrorists; conspired to provide material support to al-Shabaab; and provided material support to al-Shabaab. Mostafa faces a potential 15 years in prison for each of the three counts of the indictment. He is not in custody and is currently believed to be in Somalia.

Amina Ali and Hawo Hassan – District of Minnesota

Earlier today, FBI agents arrested Amina Farah Ali, 33, and Hawo Mohamed Hassan, 63, both naturalized U.S. citizens from Somalia and residents of Rochester, Minn. Each is charged in an indictment unsealed today with one count of conspiracy to provide material support to al-Shabaab from Sept. 17, 2008 through July 19, 2010. Ali is also charged in the indictment with 12 substantive counts of providing material support to al-Shabaab. Hassan is also charged with three counts of making false statements.

The indictment alleges that, as part of the conspiracy, Ali communicated by telephone with people in Somalia who requested financial assistance for al-Shabaab. Ali, Hassan and others

allegedly raised money for these individuals by soliciting funds door-to-door in Somali communities in Minneapolis, Rochester and other locations in the United States and Canada. In addition, the defendants allegedly raised money by direct appeal to individuals participating in teleconferences that featured speakers who encouraged donations to support al-Shabaab. Ali also allegedly raised funds under the false pretense that such funds were for the poor and needy.

The indictment alleges that Ali and others transferred funds to al-Shabaab through the *hawala* money remittance system. Ali and others allegedly used false names to identify the recipients of the funds to conceal that the funds were being provided to al-Shabaab. The indictment lists 12 money transfers allegedly directed to al-Shabaab by Ali.

The indictment alleges several overt acts to carry out the fund-raising conspiracy. For example, on Oct. 26, 2008, Ali allegedly hosted a teleconference in which an unindicted co-conspirator told listeners that it was not the time to help the poor and needy in Somalia; rather the priority was to give to the *mujahidin*. Ali and Hassan allegedly recorded \$2,100 in pledges at the conclusion of the teleconference. On Feb. 10, 2009, Ali allegedly conducted another fundraising teleconference in which she told listeners to “forget about the other charities” and focus on “the jihad.”

On July 14, 2009, the day after the FBI executed a search warrant at her home, Ali allegedly contacted an unindicted co-conspirator and said, “I was questioned by the enemy here . . . they took all my stuff and are investigating it . . . do not accept calls from anyone.” The indictment further alleges that when Hassan was questioned by agents in an investigation involving international terrorism, she made false statements.

The defendants are expected to make their initial appearances later today in federal court in Minneapolis. If convicted, they face a potential 15 years in prison on the conspiracy count. Ali also faces a potential 15 years in prison on each material support count, and Hassan also faces a potential eight years in prison on each false statement count.

Third Superseding Indictment – District of Minnesota

In addition to the two arrests, prosecutors in the District of Minnesota also unsealed a July 2010 third superseding indictment that charges Abdikadir Ali Abdi, 19, a U.S. citizen; Abdisalan Hussein Ali, 21, a U.S. citizen; Cabdulaahi Ahmed Faarax, 33, a U.S. citizen; Farah Mohamed Beledi, 26; and Abdiweli Yassin Isse, 26. These defendants are charged with, among other things, conspiring to and providing material support to al-Shabaab and conspiring to kill, maim and injure persons abroad. Faarax and Isse had been charged in a criminal complaint previously.

Five other defendants who had been previously charged by indictment are named in the third superseding indictment. They are Ahmed Ali Omar, 27; Khalid Mohamud Abshir, 27; Zakaria Maruf, 31; Mohamed Abdullahi Hassan, 22; and Mustafa Ali Salat, 20. These defendants are charged with conspiracies to provide material support to terrorists and foreign terrorist organizations; conspiracy to kill, kidnap, maim and injure persons abroad; possessing and discharging a firearm during a crime of violence; and solicitation to commit a crime of violence.

The unsealed indictment alleges that the 10 defendants provided financial support and personnel, including themselves as fighters, both to a conspiracy to kill abroad and to the foreign terrorist organization al-Shabaab. Specifically, the indictment alleges that the five newly-added defendants traveled to Somalia in 2008 and 2009. In addition, the charges allege that Faarax solicited Salah Osman Ahmed, Shirwa Ahmed (now deceased) and Kamal Said Hassan to provide support to al-Shabaab, and that Faraax made false statements to the FBI in a matter involving international terrorism. The indictment also alleges that, in October 2009, Beledi committed passport fraud.

An affidavit previously filed in the case alleges that, in the fall of 2007, Faarax and others met at a Minneapolis mosque to telephone co-conspirators in Somalia to discuss the need for Minnesota-based co-conspirators to go to Somalia to fight. The affidavit also alleges that Faarax attended a subsequent meeting in Minneapolis where he encouraged others to fight in Somalia and told them how he had experienced true brotherhood while fighting jihad in Somalia. Faarax was later interviewed three times by authorities and each time denied knowing anyone who had fought in Somalia or encouraging anyone to fight in Somalia.

The affidavit also alleges that Abdiweli Yassin Isse encouraged others to travel to Somalia to fight. At a gathering of co-conspirators, Isse purportedly described his plans to wage “jihad” against Ethiopians in Somalia, and later raised money to purchase airline tickets for others to travel to Somalia for the same purpose. In raising this money, he allegedly misled community members into thinking they were contributing money to send young men to Saudi Arabia to study the Koran. The 10 defendants charged in the third superseding indictment are not in custody and are believed to be overseas.

The charges against all the defendants in Minnesota stem from an ongoing, two-year investigation into the recruitment of persons from the United States to train with or fight for al-Shabaab. To date, a total of 19 persons have been charged in the District of Minnesota in indictments or criminal complaints that have been unsealed. Nine of these Minnesota defendants have been arrested in the United States or overseas, five of whom pleaded guilty. The remaining defendants are at large and believed to be abroad.

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The case in the Southern District of Alabama is being investigated by the FBI’s Joint Terrorism Task Force in Mobile, Ala., and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Sean P. Costello, of the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of Alabama, and Trial Attorney Sharon Lever of the Counterterrorism Section of the Justice Department’s National Security Division.

The case in the Southern District of California is being investigated by the FBI’s San Diego Joint Terrorism Task Force and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys William P. Cole and Shane P. Harrigan of the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of California, and Trial Attorney Sharon Lever of the Counterterrorism Section of the Justice Department’s National Security Division.

The cases in the District of Minnesota are being investigated by the FBI's Minneapolis Joint Terrorism Task Force, with the assistance of the Dutch KLPD; the Dutch Ministry of Justice; the Justice Department's Office of International Affairs; the State Department, including U.S. Embassies in the United Arab Emirates and Yemen; the Hague in the Netherlands; and the Department of Defense. The cases are being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys W. Anders Folk and Jeffrey S. Paulsen, of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Minnesota, and Trial Attorneys William M. Narus and Steven Ward of the Counterterrorism Section of the Justice Department's National Security Division.

The public is reminded that an indictment contains mere allegations. A defendant is presumed innocent until he or she pleads guilty or is proven guilty at trial.

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